

## St Peter Claver Society for African Orphans

### 20<sup>th</sup> year Anniversary (2003-2023)

**2001-02** Fr Hathaway, then pastor at St. John the Beloved and parishioners donate to Zambia Orphans of AIDS (ZOA), a charity co-founded by Shimwaayi Muntemba, a parishioner at St John the Beloved.

**2002** Fr Cosmas K'ohieno, visiting priest from Kenya, encourages Shimwaayi to raise with Fr Hathaway the possibility of forming an Apostolate to assist African orphans. With huge smiles, Fr Hathaway agrees to this possibility.

**2002** A committee of ten parishioners is formed.

**2003** Fr. Hathaway names the Apostolate after St Peter Claver. St Peter Claver Society (SPCS) is born and supports its first project.

### St. Peter Claver Society Projects

The SPCS committee decided to focus on Zambia where ZOA had identified some community driven projects, supported by Catholic churches.

Starting in 2003, SPCS has supported four projects:

- St Anthony Children's Village, Ndola;
- Mulele Mwana (care for the child) Youth Skills Training Centre, Lusaka;
- Bishop Mazombwe Children's Care Farm, Rufunsa;
- Cardinal Mazombwe Agricultural and Life Skills Training Centre, Livingstone Diocese, Makunika parish.

1. **St Anthony Children's Village** - supported by SPCS since it was established in 2003. It is run by Dominican sisters.

#### ***Aims:***

- to provide shelter, nutrition, medical care, and quality education initially to infants and children orphaned by AIDS but currently includes other vulnerable children, and young adults with cerebral palsy, mental illness or physical challenges.
- to offer holistic care to these special needs children and youth.

***Numbers:*** St Anthony's cares for 90-120 children annually.

#### ***SPCS support goes toward:***

- the pre-school, which is run for resident children, though it also accepts children from the neighboring compound at a fee.
- a few children enrolled in high school.
- the purchase of equipment for the physically challenged children and the hiring of a physiotherapist.



Preschoolers



Physiotherapist at St. Anthony's

2. **Mulele Mwana Youth Skills Training Centre** is a project of St. Charles Lwanga Catholic church in Lusaka.

**Since 2004, SPCS supported:**

- a tailoring class by paying for professional sewing machines. In 2011, SPCS funded the purchase of more advanced sewing machines and encouraged the tailoring class to work toward self-sustainability which was realized by 2014. The activity is now known as the Fashion Design and Textile Technology.
- the catering training initiative for two years until they could find other donors.
- funding a breakfast and lunch program for over 250 students at the Mulele Mwana community school from 2006 to 2017, when the Zambian government closed community schools.
- paying for the graduation examination fees for 20-22 students each year.

**Results:**

- some schools in Lusaka hire tailoring graduates every year to sew uniforms.
- graduates from the tailoring class have set up small businesses in dress making.
- a cooperative has been established in a local market.
- young women have been trained in fashion design.
- graduates in other technical areas are employed or operate their own small businesses.



*Mulele Mwana Tailoring Class*



*Catering Class*

**Bishop Mazombwe Orphan Care Farm, Rufunsa, 75 miles east of Lusaka** was initiated by Cardinal Mazombwe in 2008 when he was Archbishop of Lusaka Archdiocese. At his request, the local chief donated 55 hectares to encourage agricultural initiatives to assist the many orphans created by AIDS.

**Aims:**

- to provide accommodations for children attending day schooling
- to provide a home during holidays for older children in secondary schools and colleges
- children to learn to grow vegetables and maize for their own consumption
- to offer children an opportunity to learn skills in other agricultural areas such as piggery and poultry management

**SPCS support:** started in 2011.

- facilitated sinking of a water well, mainly for domestic consumption
- provided funds to initiate a poultry project and a renovated pigsty.
- supported tertiary education for an average of 11 students each year until 2020, to resume in 2022 with two students.
- renovated the two residential houses for girls and boys.

**Results:**

- 2012 - 2014 improved chicken coop and pigsty
- Improved the children's diets with addition the farm's harvests.
- surplus maize, vegetables, chickens, and pigs sold for a little income.
- paid the tuition for students to become nurses, teachers, and technicians.

In 2016, the onsite farm supervisor died and by 2018 the agricultural activities had come to a standstill and SPCS stopped funding it. Currently, there are independent efforts to revive the agricultural activities.

3. **Cardinal Mazombwe Agricultural and Life skills Centre (CMTC)** is a project of the Livingstone Diocese located in Makunka parish, Kazungula District. It was a "dream" of Zambia's first cardinal, Cardinal Mazombwe, to build an agricultural training facility to empower rural youths to remain in rural areas. In his last two years on earth, as he lay dying of cancer, he shared this "dream" and expressed disappointment that he could not fulfill this wish. Shimwaayi, to whom this was expressed whenever she visited him, shared this with SPCS colleagues and friends. This included our dear late friend Jay Lamonica. To honour and in memory of both Cardinal Mazombwe and our friend Jay, the SPCS committee adopted this "dream."

**Aims:**

- to empower vulnerable rural youths with skills so that they will be able to support themselves instead of rushing to urban areas where they would join the many unemployed street youths.
- to improve the agricultural performance of their communities

**SPCS support:**

- offer financial assistance to enable the construction of 1x2 classrooms; a dormitory for girls; a dormitory for boys; two teachers' houses; and an outside kitchen.
- facilitate discussions with the Ministries of Education and Agriculture on institutional options.
- facilitate discussions with district officials for inputs in the institutional status and advice on accessing local and national governmental support.
- contribute to the running costs in Year 1.

**Results:**

- completion of the classrooms
- completion of one teacher's house
- 90% completion of the girls' dormitory
- work on the boys' dormitory commences.

There is much excitement among the local youths as they witness the structures going up on the vast and hitherto seemingly idle church lands in Makunka parish. If we can raise enough money to cover the ever-increasing costs of building materials and labor, the Diocese and SPCS aim to open CMTC by July 2024.



*Teacher's House*



Classrooms